

# Need Assessment for Rebinding the Employer Branding and Talent Management in the Digital Environment

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## ARTICLE DETAILS

### Article History

Published Online: 10 February 2019

### Keywords

Employer branding, talent management, HR, digital skills

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## ABSTRACT

Acquiring digital capabilities is a prerequisite for organizations to be competitive and sustainable in today's digital environment. Organizations are finding ways to develop the tools and talent required to manage businesses in the digital era. To understand the opportunities available in this technological era, organizations need to concentrate on three factors: data-rare material, and talent & innovation-the human factors. This paper is an attempt to analyze the latest trends and strategies available, and adopted by organizations in talent management and acquiring digital skills. Employer branding is observed as a key factor in hiring and retaining potential and talented employees. The study focuses on the role of employer branding in talent management and the necessity of HR departments in developing the digital skills of employees.

## 1. Introduction

The digital environment is redesigning the system of recruitment, selection and training and development for organization. In order to increase the organizational performance, Human Resource is now submersing into digitized solutions for organizations. These solutions generate new experiences and engagement to employees. This study is based on the two dimensions; employer brand and talent management in digital context and employees' skill development in digital context.

### Research Questions

1. The role of employer branding in talent management
2. The digital skills required by the managers and employees

### Employer brand and talent management in digital context

In digital context, one of the major challenges for organizations is to attract and retain the top talent. For a long term organizational perspective, talent management signifies a strategic element of overall business model. It produces innovation in marketing communication, increases value for consumers and ultimately enhance organizational financial performance. Therefore, the search for talents is a never ending story and investments in youngsters with high potential translates in minimizing operational costs, giving the opportunity of learning the business practically according to the market requirements.

With the increased demand for talent, organizations are competing to find the right talent with the skills required for their respective businesses. Organizations are implementing different approaches to find the right talent. Top managements are also designing different strategies to attract, develop and retain talent. One such study that throws a light on how importance is finding the right talent is a study by Universum, (an organization that provides the critical talent market

insights). As a part of its Outlook series, on the State of Employer Branding, a report of 2015 states that the challenge of finding the right talent is increasing and top management are concerned about, as shown in figure 1. The study included employees working within HR, CEOs and employees working in organizations with more than 1000 employees. The study revealed the intensity of growing demand for talent and evolution of talent management as the organization's corporate strategy than just being a HR strategy. Study says that there is a misalignment still between the CEO and HR department in terms of talent management and employer branding. The study quotes a survey by PwC on global CEOs, which states that though CEOs have understood the significance of attracting and retaining talent, most of them have not yet initiated steps towards. Finally, Universum says "If talent is as important to competitive might as capital, it must be managed and measured with the same discipline applied to financial planning and management."

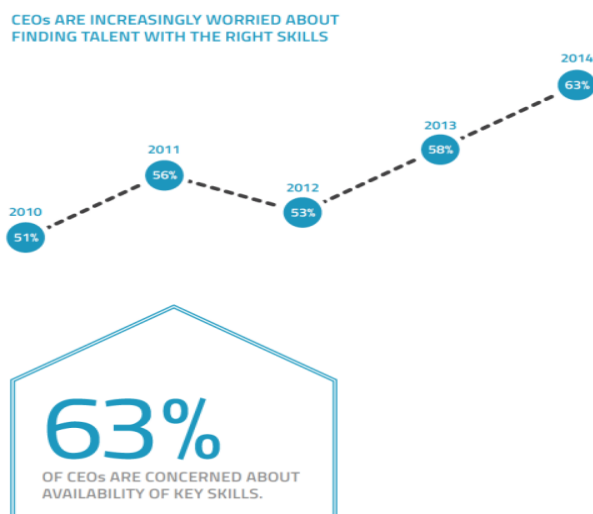


Fig. 1: Increasing worry of CEOs on finding the right talent, (Human Resources Today, 2015)

In today's digital age, organizations are relying more on social media to promote their brand image. Facebook, LinkedIn and twitter etc. are helping organizations in creating compelling recruitment videos, segmenting audience and promoting their employer brand. This innovative technique is not only facilitating in promoting brands for potential candidates but also to create a positive perspective in existing employees. A study on LinkedIn proved that social media has become a power tool to endorse employer brand as shown in figure 2 and attract potential talent thereby.

Most effective employer brand tools

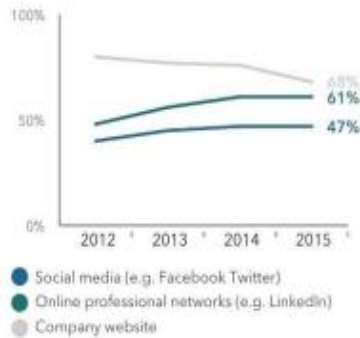


Fig.2: Most effective employer branding tools

[https://business.linkedin.com/content/dam/business/talentsolutions/global/en\\_us/c/pdfs/GRT16\\_GlobalRecruiting\\_100815.pdf](https://business.linkedin.com/content/dam/business/talentsolutions/global/en_us/c/pdfs/GRT16_GlobalRecruiting_100815.pdf)

Dell, a global organization stands as an exemplary in promoting brand image through social media. Dell's talent management team was among the first employers list to notice the importance of involving existing employees and alumni in employment branding. It showcased through social media the experience of their employees working with it and also the alumni. Thus Dell was successful in social recruiting and had followers around 265,000 by 2011 and having about LinkedIn profiles for almost every employee by 2014. By 2016, the list of LinkedIn followers and social recruits doubled year by year and reached a count of 1200,847.

**Employees' skill development in Digital context**

In digital context, the organizations need to be highly competitive. The shortage of employees' skills construct a major problem in the job market. The organization must consider the factors that influence the skill trend in this digital era. The factors like; the use of computing and analytical technologies implies the need for training of the employees. According to Capgemini Consulting (2013), a distinct problem is apprehensive with the fact, the functional area of human resource are not dynamically involved in the gaining of employees digital skills, causing in a severe encounter for talents.

**De Smet, Lund &Schaninger, (2016)** said social media giving enormous opportunities for organizations to identify, recruit and select talent over digital platforms. These platforms are effective in identifying talented individuals for defined jobs, and it characterize the connection between Big Data analytics and development of organizational performance.

**2. Literature Review**

**Mosley (2007)**signifies employer branding by representing with brand-led culture change and customer experience management: a strong mechanism for lining up of employees' brand experience with the desired customer brand experience, as a shared platform for HR and marketing.

**KPMG (2012)**reported, employer brand has become identical with employee engagement. It is because the employees are the most significant brand ambassadors. In the digital context, information about leadership, organizational culture, career opportunities and remuneration policy effects directly the desirable organizational image. Employee engagement refers to the level of bonding with the company, organizational culture, and the colleagues and employers. Engaged employees are committed to their organization and profession and represents a strategic element for the company to generate both tangible and intangible benefits. The tangible benefits include cost cutting by retention and recruitment, organizational performance, and delivering solid results. The intangible benefits include positive awareness and reputation, product promoters and brand ambassadors for the company.

**Deloitte Report(2014)**pointed out, the talent management has moved into a new development stage. Human Resource has changed to a strategic function of recruiting the extraordinary youngsters from the traditional function of recruiting, with an attention on making a robust employer brand recruiting through social network platforms like LinkedIn, Facebook, etc. and improving digital skills. For instance, Google are investing in the development of online talent communities to attract new employees. Company like Ford who created blogs in order to attract enthusiasts of the automobile industry that would like to work for them.

**Atamanik and Mallon (2015)**expresses a new approach to talent management. It focused on building capabilities for critical talent at lower maturity levels, and a shift to build a universal and inclusive relationship with talent at the highest maturity levels. The study stated a clear, communicated and targeted talent strategy for the centre of mature organizations. It encompasses integrated talent activities, which strengthen the significance of growth leader and a pervasive learning culture. "Talent as an asset" means organization should:

- Place the processes intended to enrich leaders' understanding of their employees (quantitative and qualitative perspective).
- Cultivate talent processes that enables the organization to move on the greater insight.
- Make available the resources and opportunities to employees, empowering them to build a "conversation" with organization.

**Garr et al., (2015)**Organizations, rather simply welcoming the employees 'diversity, building high level strategies and broad centred talent management practices. The strategies like lining up of diversity and inclusion strategy to organizational objectives. The broad centred talent management practices like integration between inclusion and diversity, and performance and learning management. These helps to

strengthen the significance of bringing in peoples' diversity and acting in inclusive ways.

**PwC (2015)** listed out the components of talent strategy in the digital context to appeal potential youngsters;

- Persistently looking to furnish employees with *innovative skills* by mobility programs or continuous learning.
- *Innovative thinking drives competitive advantage*; the enthusiasm of innovation, creativity and adaptability is powered by *employees' diversity*. People with an extensive range of different perspectives work together; not just different age group and gender, but different in across every dimension like physical characteristics, different backgrounds, personalities and life experiences.
- *Getting leadership right* - The digital environment needs a distinct form of management and leadership. Few of the traditional leadership qualities like courage, vision, and humility are included in the future capabilities of leadership. However, the qualities like ability to drive a sense of purpose, build trust with external and internal stakeholders, adapt to change at warp speed, anticipate aggressive competitors, and compact with important and budding risks
- *Data analytics* to deliver greater insight into how successfully skills are being positioned within the organization
- *Multiple channels to find talent* that include social networks and online platforms.

**Digital skill for managers and employees**

**Barbara Anne Combes (2009)** defined Generation Y as "digital refugees". It is due to the fact, "they have poor internet literacy skills, trust search engine results, depend on keyword

searching, and display an extraordinary level of satisfying and snaffling behaviour".

**Capgemini Consulting (2013)** point out the digital skills development entails a renovation of existing business models by emphasizing on training and amenability with the custom of new technologies, innovative tools for recruitment and selection, business incubators/start-ups and public-private partnerships with universities. Training programs for enlargement of digital skills signify a strategic element for gaining organizational performance. For instance, the partnership of P&G and Google for the improvement of employee skill in digital marketing.

**Kate Meyer (2016)** pointed out, Generation Z has proficiency in digital technologies. Not all the Generation Y people have a native ability to custom with digital devices and majority of them do not know how to use in an applied genuine business problems. In contrast to Generation X, their attention spam is too low and are not at par in multitasking. Nevertheless, Generation Y members are making their attention on gaining jobs in mobile devices and digital marketing.

**Roland Deiser and Sylvain Newton (2013)** recognized six social media skills for leaders to shape their enterprise 2.0 strategy: authentic communication, creativity, ability to make engaging multimedia content and the ability to cultivate social and technological infrastructure afar from physical and geographical boundaries. Inside the organization, the leader fulfils a number of roles related to digital literacy: like Creating compelling content, leveraging dissemination dynamics, managing communication overflow, driving strategic social-media utilization, creating an enabling organizational infrastructure, staying ahead of the curve.

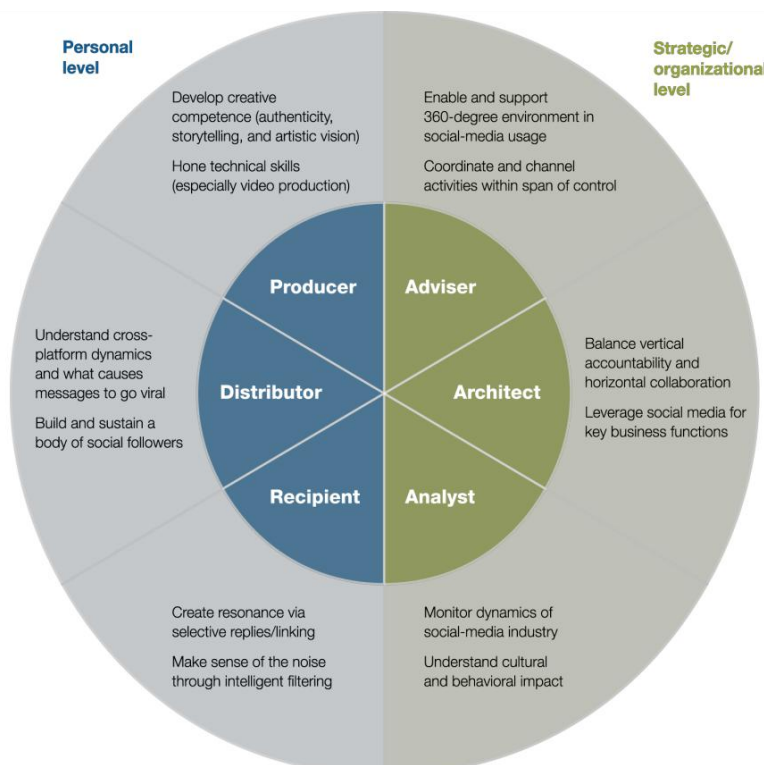


Figure 3. Six social media skills every leader needs (Deiser& Newton, 2013)

A report by the Economist Intelligence Unit (2016) on “*The Quest for Digital Skills. A multi-industry executive*” drafts out the dramatic progress of digital skills in different economic sectors and the key challenges that managers face in this concern are;

- Companies from different industries like financial services or production face major deficiencies in relation to digital skills.
- Presently, cyber-security skills, mobile and web applications skills signify the most significant skills required in the labour market.
- In contrast to Generation Y, Generation X is more unenthusiastic towards digitization of processes.
- Talents with digital skills pick out the creative industries, which is detrimental to the industries like retail, production or banking. The solution for managers is to make partnerships with business lab incubators and research labs.
- According to digitization trends digital skills gap ranges from different industries. Retail companies are focused on the development of smart products, mobile and web applications, while companies from financial industry are more concerned with cyber security (Economist Intelligence Unit, 2016, pp.3-4).

**A case of Microsoft:** A Multinational Corporation that remodelled its employer branding and recruitment process through Social Media

Microsoft, a multinational corporation that manufactures and sells a wide range of computing products has its headquarters located in Redmond, Washington, was named as one of the World’s Best Multinational Workplaces in 2011.

In the digital age, potential candidates expect their dream workplaces to be a great place to work, with global presence, dynamic and competitive. Attracting and retaining talent in such an environment is crucial. Smart companies try to understand the expectations of its potential candidates and stakeholders and adopt changes accordingly. Smart companies make their presence online and promote brand by showcasing their culture, values, and goals in a holistic way. This is where exactly Microsoft targeted. Microsoft overhauled its recruitment process when the potential candidates found it obsolete and content overload. It applied different social recruitment techniques to attract potential talent and to compete with other giants in the industry. Microsoft created a career site by name Microsoft Careers site, with a global presence and improved user experience. It created separate channels by the name Microsoft careers on various social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and LinkedIn. And also engaged in blogs to enthuse and attract potential talent.(Refer table 1)

**Table 1: Microsoft careers on social media**

Social Media Channel	Objective	Career page	Outcome
Facebook (with almost a million 'likes')	Give more detailed information about Microsoft's hiring process through FAQ's	Microsoft's Careers page	Potential candidates get info about job opportunities and latest updates
	Giving insights on how women at Microsoft help to change the way women live, work and play	Women at Microsoft	Potential candidates know about the women empowerment
Twitter (almost 80,000 followers)	To inform the potential candidates how is it to work here	@Microsoft Jobs	Candidates get news and job vacancies information.
YouTube (around 115 videos uploaded)	Promoting videos on 'Work Meets Life at Microsoft'	Microsoft Careers YouTube channel	Candidates get info on internships, diversity and culture at Microsoft
LinkedIn Over 4 million followers)	LinkedIn page with a headline 'Do What You Love' gives opportunities to contact Microsoft recruiters	Microsoft Careers	Potential candidates get information on job openings, benefits and know about life at Microsoft
Blog	Offers 'Experience Microsoft' to potential candidates	Microsoft JobsBlog	Potential candidates get practical advices and tips to prepare for a job interview

<https://linkhumans.com/microsoft-social-employer-branding/>

The efforts made by Microsoft in revamping its recruitment process and employer branding facilitated in reaching the right talent, engaging its applicants in effective way and sharing employee experiences. It also helped the potential candidates to know, understand, and experience the culture and values of Microsoft. The unique ways adopted by Microsoft to reach potential candidates through social media increased its new hires by almost 300 per cent in 2011 and still anticipates to boost its hiring capability with more technology advancements.

**3. Conclusion**

Effective organizations reinvent themselves with a focus on the need to digitize HR processes and application of latest tools to communicate and learn. Digital environment is remodelling the organization’s approach towards recruitment, selection and skill development of employees and managers. Organizations are concentrating on attracting talent through employer branding and developing core skills to enhance organizational performance. Core skills includes advance skills in problem solving, design thinking and decision-making. (Deloitte, 2016, p.1) Top management including CEO and HR managers are emphasizing the need to develop an environment where employees are more engaged, have more

career advancements. Subsequently, they are focusing on employer branding and implementation of digital technologies to reinvent workplace environment. In the digital context, the responsibility of managers and especially of HR managers is more crucial in attracting the new generation through employer

branding and developing the skills required to remain competitive. Moreover, attracting the talented Gen Y and balancing them with the right incentives is a greater challenge for them.

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